



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/635,899

08/07/2003

Aidan Petrie

07298.0075.NPUS01

7813

68768

7590

06/19/2009

NOVAK DRUCE AND QUIGG, LLP (Thule)

1000 LOUISIANA STREET

FIFTY-THIRD FLOOR

HOUSTON, TX 77002

EXAMINER

ROWAN, KURT C

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3643

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

06/19/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/635,899	Applicant(s) PETRIE ET AL.	
	Examiner Kurt Rowan	Art Unit 3643	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 March 2009 & 2/19/2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 and 11-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-8 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 9 and 11-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 March 2009 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings were received on 3/25/2009. These drawings are acceptable.

Specification

The substitute specification filed 2/19/2009 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 9, 11-12, 14, 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Washington (4523704)
6. The patent to Washington shows a carrier box for holding fishing rods and reels that is configured to be mounted to carrying vehicle. Washington shows a carrier box 10 having a lid portion 22 and a base portion 24. Washington shows an interior of the carrier box configured to receive and support a fishing rod and reel. The carrier box is configured to be substantially weather-tight in the closed configuration. The patent to Washington shows an access aperture 44 through the carrier box from a front end to a rear end that is configured to permit a portion of the fishing rod to project outside the carrier box when in the closed configuration as shown in fig. 2. Washington shows a clamping arrangement 42 configured to releasably fasten upon a vehicular carrier rack.

Art Unit: 3643

Washington shows a pliable buffer 50, 51 arranged within an interior of the access aperture 26, 28 since the interior of the access aperture can be considered to be the interior of the carrier box. Washington shows the buffer arranged to form-fit about a portion of the fishing rod 12, 18 that is positioned in the carrier box. Washington show from the drawing that the material that forms the pliable buffer to be some type of foam material which can be considered to form a weather resistant barrier between the exterior and interior of the carrier box in the closed configuration when a fishing rod is installed therein as shown in Fig. 2. In reference to claims 11 and 18, Washington shows an anchor arrangement 38 for securing the distal end of a fishing rod. The anchor arrangement has a top portion having a height that is substantially the same as the access apertures so that a fishing rod is substantially level to a roof of a vehicle when the carrier arrangement is mounted thereon as shown in Fig. 3. In reference to claim 12, Washington shows a portion of the carrier box such as the bottom is adapted to form a stand to act as a free standing storage arrangement. In reference to claim 14, Washington shows the carrier box tapers towards a forward end for aerodynamic purpose as shown in Fig. 3. In reference to claim 17, Washington shows a plurality of access openings 44.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

Art Unit: 3643

invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 13, 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Washington (US 4523704) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Michal (US 3662933).

The patent to Washington shows a fishing rod and reel holder as discussed above.

Washington shows the base portion and the lid portion being hinged 34 as shown in Fig.

1 for pivotal movement between the base and the lid noting Figs. 1-2. The patent to

Michal shows a fishing rod and reel carrier. Michal shows a seal arrangement 45, 46

between mating lip portions of the lid 48 and base portions 20. In reference to claim 13,

it would have been obvious to provide Washington with a seal arrangement as shown

by Michal for the purpose of protecting the lip from wear. In reference to claim 21,

Washington shows all of the elements recited noting claim 9, above, with the exception

of the anchor arrangement separate from the carrier box and attached to a vehicular

rack a distance away from the carrier box. Michal shows a carrier box 46, 47 for fishing

rods mounted on a roof rack 32, 32. Michal shows an anchor arrangement 36 separate

from the carrier box and attached to the vehicular rack 32 at a distance away from the

carrier box for securing a distal end of a fishing rod 22 installed in the carrier box 46, 47.

It would have been obvious to provide Washington with an anchor arrangement and

roof rack as shown by Michal to hold the rods and the carrier box to the roof of an

automobile.

Art Unit: 3643

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Washington as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of Zielinski (US 5678348). The patent to Washington shows a fishing rod and reel carrier arrangement as discussed above and shows a plurality of access apertures 44. Washington does not show a pliable buffer arranged in the interior of the access aperture. The patent to Zielinski shows a fishing rod and reel carrier arrangement having a plurality of apertures 20, 22, 24, 26 having a pliable buffer 60 arranged within the interior as shown in Fig. 2. In reference to claim 15, it would have been obvious to provide Washington with a pliable buffer as shown by Zielinski for the purpose of protecting the fishing rods.

5. Claims 16, 19, 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Washington (US 4523704).

6. The patent to Washington shows a fishing rod and reel carrier as discussed above. In reference to claim 16, Washington does not show drainage holes in the bottom of the base portion. However, it would have been obvious to provide Washington with drainage holes to let water out of the carrier. The examiner takes Official Notice that drainage holes in fishing tackle carriers is old and well known in the art. In reference to claim 19, Washington shows the access apertures 44 as having a round shape, but it would have been obvious employ a rectangular shape since the function is the same and no showing of unexpected results was made. See *In re Dailey et al.*, 149 USPQ 47. In reference to claim 20, Washington shows one rod per access aperture, but it would have been obvious to secure more than one rod depending on the

Art Unit: 3643

size of the rods and the size of the aperture for multiplied effect. See *In re Harza*, 124 USPQ 378 which states that duplication of parts for multiplied effect is obvious.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed 3/25/2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's arguments in regard to the rejection of claim 10 under 35 USC 102 have been answered in the above rejection. Also, it should be pointed out that Washington shows a pliable buffer 50, 51 arranged within an interior of the access aperture noting how the access aperture is defined. In regard to claim 11, it should be pointed out that the handle 38 of Washington parallel to a front surface of the carrier box is at a distance away from the carrier box to the vehicular carrier rack which in this case would be interpreted to be the suction caps. Claim 21 in contrast to claim 11, recites that the anchor arrangement is separate from the carrier box. In regard to claim 13, it should be pointed out that the limitations of claim 13 are not exactly the same as those recited in canceled claim 10 since claim 13 recites the mating lip portions and claim 10 (now part of claim 9) does not. Hence, the grounds of rejection are different. In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971). In response to

Art Unit: 3643

applicant's argument that Zielinski is nonanalogous art, it has been held that a prior art reference must either be in the field of applicant's endeavor or, if not, then be reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the applicant was concerned, in order to be relied upon as a basis for rejection of the claimed invention. See *In re Oetiker*, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 USPQ2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, the prior art reference to Zielinski is not only found in the same subclass as Washington, but it is also reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which applicant was concerned, namely holding a plurality of fishing rods in an array for transportation. In response to applicant's argument that Washington and Zielinski are two systems completely different from one another, the test for obviousness is not whether the features of a secondary reference may be bodily incorporated into the structure of the primary reference; nor is it that the claimed invention must be expressly suggested in any one or all of the references. Rather, the test is what the combined teachings of the references would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981). Clearly the claims of the present invention should be amended to overcome the prior art rejections.

Conclusion

8. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

Art Unit: 3643

mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kurt Rowan whose telephone number is (571) 272-6893. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 6:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Poon can be reached on (571) 272-6891. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Application/Control Number: 10/635,899
Art Unit: 3643

Page 9

Kurt Rowan
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3643

KR
/Kurt Rowan/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3643